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COLOMBIA:

Liberal Presidential Candidates Positions

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COLOMBIA
Liberal Presidential Candidates' Positions

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Public Order and Peace

33480284a Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish
22 Jul 89 pp 1A, 6A

[Special article series: "Presidential Precandidates' Positions"; All responses by Luis Carlos Galan have been excerpted]

[Excerpts] Today EL ESPECTADOR begins a series of special reports with a comparison of the positions of the six Liberal precandidates on various issues of national interest, such as peace, the coffee problem, the battle against drug trafficking, constitutional reform and the plebiscite, the coffee problem [as published], oil policy, the future of the railroads, etc. The purpose is to enable our readers to learn about the philosophies of those who aspire to the presidential nomination and to find out what solutions they are offering the country on the various issues.

In our first report we present today the proposals put forth by Luis Carlos Galan, Hernando Duran, Ernesto Samper Pizano, Alberto Santofimio, William Jaramillo, and Jaime Castro on the peace policy, the dialogues, and public order. [passage omitted on Galan]

Ballots Vs. Bullets: Duran

Hernando Duran Dussan: "We are going to confront bullets with ballots. We will bring back security and peace to Colombians. I will fight to make sure that we can walk the streets all over our cities during the day, as well as on rural roads....I have agreed to run as a precandidate because I am convinced that I have the will, the character, and the ability to bring order to this country. That is why I have adopted a campaign slogan that inspires my behavior: democracy with energy. That is what is needed in the government. Less handshaking and more firm-handedness, so that the Republic and the rule of law are not drowned in this sea of blood and barbarism that is terrorizing us and that has brought our country to levels of violence unmatched anywhere in the world today."

Duran Dussan has said in recent days that he regards "self-defense" as a legitimate response to violence, extortion, and kidnaping, provided that it does not assume an aggressive position or go beyond reasonable limits or become confused with the so-called private justice groups.

Two Strategies of Jaramillo Gomez

William Jaramillo Gomez: "Peace requires two strategies, combating the poverty that 40 percent of our population suffers and eliminating the so-called 'dirty war.' These strategies must be independent, because the dirty war is a consequence of the civil war that is rooted in backwardness and poverty. If we eliminate the consequences without getting at the root of the problem, it will be like recurring malaria fevers; soon the phenomena of insurrection and dirty war will reappear.

"Regaining tranquility is a goal that is central to the greatest hopes of the Colombian people. We cannot continue the foolish pursuit of dialogue for the sake of dialogue. To make the dialogues bear fruit, we must separate the examination of the consequences of the war from that of the causes that lie behind it. A peace plan requires the end of the dirty war that has taken so many lives, but we must wage a front-line battle against poverty and backwardness so that the manifestations of insurrection and fratricidal violence do not reappear. Peace will be won only with the will of all and on all democratic battlegrounds."

No Iron Rule, Says Samper

Ernesto Samper Pizano: "In response to the alternative that some have begun to mention, that 6 months of iron rule will put an end to guerrilla warfare and violence, we propose 10 years of establishing patterns of coexistence in society in order to bring about peace, a truly lasting goal among all Colombians.

"It is necessary to establish a system of democratic coexistence, modernizing institutions, making the productive system more efficient, and promoting a program of social organization to help the weakest sectors."

Samper says that he believes "it is more important to defend a Conservative peasant than a Liberal landowner."

New Public Organization: Castro

Jaime Castro: "Government reform for the purpose of building a new public organization in political and administrative terms is closely linked to the attainment of peace; it is the doorway to peace. Peace in Colombia does not depend only on solving the guerrilla problem, and will only be achieved when the crossfire of the violence caused by guerrilla warfare, paramilitary activity, drug trafficking, and common crime is eliminated, as these types of violence overlap and feed on each other.

"Peace does not depend on magic formulas or thaumaturgical decisions. It can only be achieved through the implementation of a network of policies and strategies that are in turn held together by a series of structural decisions. That is why it has been said that peace is not just around the corner, that its attainment will take time and that we must grapple with the difficulties of violence for a long time."

Santofimio Proposes New Order

Alberto Santofimio Botero: His proposal is summed up by the slogan "a new constitutional order for peace and a social economy with a human face." He says, "Without far-reaching reform that opens up real political space to the insurgency through the formation of a national electoral district for minorities that would enable guerrilla spokesmen to be elected to Congress; without a bold transformation of the legislative, judicial, and executive

branches; without progress toward direct democracy, with the institutionalization of the plebiscite and the referendum; without a real democratization of television to make it pluralistic; without a new economic model that destroys the unjust concentration of wealth in a few hands, that redistributes income and offers employment and buying power to our compatriots; without all these changes, there will be no peace, just ephemeral truces and momentary mobilizations, as social despair has exceeded the bounds of the political and the conventional.

"Peace is impossible without a new constitution and without a fundamental change in the economic and social model. By the same token, the ill-conceived solution proposed by some would involve an endless war that would cleave Colombia in two, as happened in Vietnam and Korea."

Coffee Prices, Agreements

33480284b Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 26 Jul 89 p 7A

[Special article series: "Presidential Precandidates' Positions"; all responses by Luis Carlos Galan have been excerpted]

[Excerpts] The coffee problem is of grave concern to Colombian political officials, to the extent that the Congress of the Republic is beginning a comprehensive debate this week as the Liberal Party poses specific questions to Finance Minister Luis Fernando Alarcon regarding the strategies adopted by the government to deal with plunging coffee prices on international markets.

Liberal presidential precandidates Luis Carlos Galan, Hernando Duran Dussan, Ernesto Samper Pizano, Alberto Santofimio Botero, William Jaramillo, and Jaime Castro are not unfamiliar with this issue; on the contrary, each of them has very specific ideas about the solutions that must be undertaken on an emergency basis in view of the serious crisis unnleashed by the breakdown of the World Pact.

For this reason, today we devote EL ESPECTADOR's second report on the philosophies and programs of the presidential aspirants to this subject. Their opinions follow:

Samper Proposes Three Strategies

Ernesto Samper Pizano: "Colombia is in a better position than any other country to cope with the so-called 'coffee war'; the experience of the National Coffee Federation and the close coordination between coffee policy and economic policy are positive aspects of Colombia's advantageous situation. To deal successfully with the crisis, we propose more aggressiveness in our foreign trade policy, possibly including the revival of instruments such as the subsidy that is now granted to Colombian exports and the Pancafe enterprise, so that we can sell our coffee directly. This policy might also include more active intervention in the futures markets to stabilize the price and reduce commissions paid for the deals carried out by a few transnational corporations in whose name the U.S. Government is apparently acting now.

"A second strategy, on the domestic front, should strengthen cooperatives as instruments of exportation. This would offset the fall in prices through the distribution of marketing margins. In addition, now is the time to consider making the behavior of coffee prices symmetrical with the value-added tax, so that when the latter falls the sector's tax obligation will decline as well. And a third strategy involves a clear diplomatic action, not to 'beg the forgiveness of the United States,' as some suggest, but to identify positions with other sellers on the market and to look into the possibility of reviving the Pact: It would be a coffee self-defense group." [passage omitted on Galan]

Future Uncertain, Says Santofimio

Alberto Santofimio Botero: "The future of coffee is perilously uncertain. The breakdown of the Quota Pact, caused by, among other factors, the frankly hostile attitude of the United States, allied with the group of 'other soft ones,' opens up a new cycle that does away with the stability that prevailed in the coffee sector thanks to the Pact. This situation must be confronted not only with the coffee supply, but also with a strategy of increasing export volumes, opening up new markets in regions such as Asia, and stepping up an advertising and marketing campaign. Moreover, we must outline a policy of austerity in the use of National Coffee Fund resources, avoiding risky investments such as those made in speculative financial enterprises that have nothing to do with the coffee economy.

"The decline in prices and the instability resulting from the breakdown of the Quota Pact sooner or later will have adverse effects on the coffee fund's solvency. These effects will inevitably be felt in the economic and social situations of coffee-growing regions and coffee growers, and in the entire national economy."

Tax Exemptions: Duran

Hernando Duran Dussan: "Above all else, coffee must be defended, as it is the country's image, the backbone of its economy. It is essential that the Coffee Congress be convened for an emergency session, so that coffee producers can study solutions to the serious crisis that has hit this sector as a result of the breakdown of the World Pact.

"One of the immediate solutions is to exempt coffee growers from all taxes. Coffee producers cannot be fed to the lions. Coffee has always contributed to the Colombian economy, and now that coffee is in crisis, the rest of the economy should give it a hand."

Duran emphasized that the National Coffee Fund "was created precisely to help coffee growers during the lean times."

Jaramillo Gomez Calls for Compensation

William Jaramillo Gomez: "In view of the abrupt fall in foreign exchange earnings from coffee, it will be necessary to compensate for the loss by exporting other goods and to combat the effects of terrorism on oil exports in order to avoid an exchange crisis. At the same time, to ensure that coffee growers' income does not suffer the pernicious effects of the decline in prices on the international market, it will be necessary to strengthen the National Coffee Fund and to proceed immediately to liquidate the businesses that are not necessary for the operation of the coffee trade, as I proposed during the coffee debate last year. These recommendations, which are linked to the new contract, would give the fund more liquidity and enable it to purchase the coffee crop at fair prices."

Castro's Formula: Cooperation

Jaime Castro: "The government and the Foreign Ministry have yet to inform the country what political actions they took to prevent the demise of the Pact and what steps they have begun to take to ensure that it will remain in effect.

"The resulting situation intensifies the economic and political conditions that are obliging the country to renegotiate or reschedule its foreign debt and facilitating the transactions that must be carried out for that purpose.

"The coffee organization deserves the country's support, as it has supported the nation on repeated occasions. To make this support effective, the government and the Federation of Coffee Growers must pursue a decisive policy of cooperation and agree on the measures that are so urgently needed to overcome the current emergency."

In conclusion, Dr Jaime Castro not only demands a statement by the government explaining its action with regard to the Pact, but also proposes a policy of cooperation with the coffee growers and urges that the present opportunity be seized to reschedule the foreign debt.

Constitutional Reform

33480284c Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 29 Jul 89 pp 1A, 11A

[Special article series: "Presidential Precandidates' Positions"; All responses by Luis Carlos Galan have been excerpted]

[Excerpts] Next week Minister of Government Orlando Vasquez Velasquez will undertake important negotiations with the various political sectors and with the presidential precandidates in order to agree on a schedule for processing constitutional reform legislation in the Congress of the Republic.

The government, Liberal leaders, and the Alvarist faction of the Conservative Party have already reached a virtual understanding on key points of the legislation, which is now in the second round of deliberations in both houses. The provisions of that understanding will be implemented on Tuesday. Much ground remains to be covered in the talks, however. The delegation that follows the directives of the National Executive of the Social Conservatives and the parliamentary forces of the Patriotic Union will also be involved in the talks, obviously.

Meanwhile, the Liberal candidates who aspire to the presidency, Luis Carlos Galan, Hernando Duran Dussan, Ernesto Samper Pizano, Alberto Santofimio, Jaime Castro, and William Jaramillo, have expressed their ideas on the key aspects of the reform package.

With this third installment, EL ESPECTADOR continues its series of reports on "the precandidates and their positions," begun a week ago for the purpose of contributing to a constructive ideological comparison in the political campaign and throughout the popular consultation. [passage omitted on Galan]

'Crisis of Legitimacy'

Ernesto Samper Pizano: "Every historic moment has a constitutional moment. If the Constitution of 1886 reflected an era of centralism, individualism, and authoritarianism, the present era is, on the contrary, one of decentralization, calls for solidarity, and democratic openness. The constitutional reform package should reflect these principles. For this reason, I make a distinction between its declarative part, which should contain provisions regarding popular sovereignty, rights, and other standards; and the functional part, which deals with the functioning of the branches of government and more specifically the judiciary (which should be financially autonomous and nonpartisan) and Congress (which should regain its power of political oversight). There are also the provisions for peace, which include the establishment of the plebiscite and the referendum and the concept of a national electoral district in order to guarantee the right of minorities to participate in Congress. Nothing can be as frustrating as the recent revocation of the plebiscite. To correct this historic error, the constitutional reform legislation should provide for plebiscites. Let us be perfectly clear about this: Colombia is not undergoing a crisis of legality, of laws regulating institutions; it is a crisis of legitimacy, of credibility in these institutions. For this reason, it does no good to have constitutional reform if it is not backed by the will of the people, either directly or indirectly."

'Article 16: the Most Important'

Hernando Duran Dussan: "I believe that the current constitutional reform package has some good points, and I think it should be passed. But it cannot be passed without some modifications, and it also has some conflicting and difficult aspects. The Political Constitution,

to be regarded as such, must be the product of an accord by Congress, of a political compromise entered into by those who have the power and the right to vote. For this reason, this reform effort cannot be exclusively Liberal or exclusively Conservative; it certainly cannot be an exclusively Socialist or Communist reform. On the contrary, it is my contention that this reform must be the fruit of the votes of the Liberals, Conservatives, and Socialists in Congress. But there are some points that must be discussed, and new political accords must be reached on them.

"Speaking of constitutional reform, I think it is imperative that Article 16 of the Constitution be enforced. It will not be amended, and I think it is of tremendous importance. This article is an instrument of peace. It says: 'Authorities are instituted in Colombia to protect the lives, honor, and property of the citizenry.' That is what my administration would do."

Duran expressed disagreement with the creation of the "electoral district," pointing out that Congress already decided against this matter. He argued that while the representation that the minorities have is increasing, it is not fair to deny the majorities who reside in national territory an adequate presence in Congress.

'Auditor's Court Necessary'

William Jaramillo Gomez: "Although the constitutional reform will not end up being very substantial, after the breakdown of the Casa de Narino Pact due to the fall of the Auditor's Court, which is an essential instrument for monitoring spending, at least the amendment of Article 218 must be preserved. This amendment establishes the system for reforming our Constitution by means of legislative act, referendum, or a constituent assembly.

"Despite this, however, I believe that it is imperative that we revive the political accords to approve the Auditor's Court. I announced this at the party's national convention, because Colombia's oversight systems are notoriously inadequate. It is patently clear that while the current mechanisms of control and monitoring are being extended, corruption is actually growing instead of shrinking. In Germany, for example, where there is an Auditor's Court, 500 people oversee the huge budget of the third-largest economic power in the world. We can easily conclude that although the human element working in the Office of the Comptroller General is honest—at least that is the assumption we must go by until it is proven otherwise—the problem lies in the oversight procedures themselves. We cannot continue to feign blindness, waving our sticks in the air as if we did not know where the pinata is."

'Reform the Reform'

Jaime Castro: "The far-reaching political reform that the country's institutions need should be delineated on the basis of guidelines that recognize how very important it is, placing it in a perspective that goes beyond the current legislature and giving it a truly substantial content. And to achieve this objective, the Liberals cannot shirk their responsibilities because of short-term political considerations. In handling this issue, we must demonstrate the serious attitude of the parties that aspire to hold power.

"The constitutional reform bill that is going through Congress deserves these comments and more. The chapter on the administration of justice has been seriously questioned by the Office of the Attorney General of the Nation, and these objections must be heeded. The reform of the legislative chambers dismantles the executive and reduces the powers of the government. The reluctance to deal with the question of departments and municipalities manifests a failure to recognize the country's need for an advanced Regional and Local Autonomy Statute and the decentralization effort that is fortunately inspiring the industrial, commercial, and banking sectors of the nation. And the omission of issues such as the revocation of the mandate, the single-member district, the representation of intendancies and commissariats in Congress, and the national electoral district, deprives the reform effort of the key elements that would make it a true opening to democracy.

"In other words, the bill is limited and insufficient. Given this situation, it is necessary to call for a reform of the reform package and for a broadening of its scope, because inexcusable omissions were made."

'Plebiscite Needed'

Alberto Santofimio Botero: "In the second round of legislative processing, it is impossible to support a constitutional reform bill that is incompatible, ideologically inconsistent, and not genuinely open to national forms of reconciliation, consensus, and responsibility. A radical reform of Congress, the judiciary, and the government in general cannot emerge from bureaucratic bargaining and political price-setting in this uncharted labyrinth that the Colombian Congress has become.

"A single chamber with a censure vote, mandatory voting, the elimination of parity in the high courts of justice, the popular election of the attorney general, the vice president, and the governors—none of these will be possible through ordinary, traditional channels.

"Only the decision of the primary Constituent Assembly can legitimize the country's true willingness to change, and unfortunately this is not reflected in the current composition of the Congress. That is why I am an advocate of the plebiscite, although I believe that the following issues can be salvaged from the current reform package: the non-reelection of the president, some aspects of the Reform of 1979, regarding Congress and the judiciary, and the amendment of Article 218 to make the plebiscite possible."

Narcotics Trafficking

33480284d Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish
30 Jul 89 pp 1A, 11A

[Special article series: "Presidential Precandidates' Positions"; All responses by Luis Carlos Galan have been excerpted]

[Excerpts] We cannot fight drug trafficking alone; it requires cooperation and an international commitment, agree precandidates Luis Carlos Galan, Hernando Duran, Ernesto Samper, Jaime Castro, Alberto Santifimio, and William Jaramillo.

The deadline set by the National Liberal Directorate for the six presidential precandidates to submit their proposals to contribute to the party platform for 1990 falls on 15 August. The platform will be adopted by the ideological congress on 28 and 29 October.

One of the most important planks in that Liberal platform will necessarily be the struggle against narcotics trafficking.

The presidential aspirants' views on this issue of vital importance are presented in this fourth installment of the series "Every Precandidate Has His Position," which EL ESPECTADOR has been running since 22 July as a positive contribution to the comparison of ideas in the primary election.

Bilateral Commission

Ernesto Samper Pizano: "The drug trafficking issue must be reexamined totally. Things which we assumed were absolute truths and for which we had explanations a few years ago, such as the control of production in Colombia and of consumption in the United States, must be looked at again: Consumption is now taking place in Colombia, and production is taking place in the United States. I propose a Bilateral Commission at the highest level (chaired by people of presidential stature) to reexamine the problem, to establish responsibilities in the different stages of production, distribution, financing, and consumption of drugs, and to draw up a mutually acceptable plan of action to solve the problem. We must 'denarcotize' our relations with the United States and make them understand that attitudes such as those assumed with the Coffee Pact or with regard to sugar, and punitive actions against our flowers contribute nothing to the search for an alternative solution to the problem. On the contrary, these attitudes stimulate and aggravate the problem. The campaigns against consumption are indispensable. The point of departure for a reformulation of the antidrug strategy must be realistic: We must remove from the discussion the matter of extradition, which is an unpopular instrument of little political viability, the naive notion of expropriating the property of people involved in the business, and the idea of lowering the demand for narcotics in the United States, where a veritable 'drug culture' has emerged." [passage omitted on Galan]

'Comprehensive Policy Required'

Jaime Castro: "We are lacking a policy, a comprehensive, consistent strategy that will enable us to fight effectively against drug trafficking and to counteract its harmful consequences as well as its tragic impact. For a time extradition replaced that missing policy, with well-known results: Drug trafficking did not decline and the conflict with those who engage in it and benefit from it became so radical and bloody that it was intolerable. This is one of the reasons why we are the country that has paid the highest sacrifice in the world. When the Supreme Court struck down extradition, we remained without a policy. That is why we depend on instructions from abroad, and we have ceased defending in practice the interests of the main consumer. To make matters worse, this consumer is doing nothing, or very little, to combat this scourge. The harsh treatment it accords our nationals contrasts with the leniency with which it treats its own citizens, who are guilty of equally scandalous conduct.

"We need, therefore, to design and execute an independent and also comprehensive policy, because the phenomenon must be confronted in all its manifestations: domestic consumption, which unfortunately is growing every day, rehabilitation programs, economic and political effects, the criminal behavior that this phenomenon entails and its metastasis in the social body, etc. All of this must be analyzed and decided upon according to realistic criteria. For example, it is essential that we bear in mind that this is a fundamentally economic crime. In the immediate term, it can be controlled more effectively with measures that are also fundamentally economic in nature.

"Since it is clear that we cannot struggle alone because we need international aid and cooperation, the Multilateral Treaty of Vienna, promoted by the United Nations and signed by our country last year, must be the point of departure for the design of this policy. But with this treaty we may have the same experience we had with the extradition treaty of 1989: We approved it without gauging its implications and consequences. For this reason, we must subject it to a broad debate, not just in Congress. It would also be worthwhile to determine how committed the international community is to this instrument, because so far, as far as we know, only the Bahamas has ratified it. The other signatories have not even submitted it to their respective congresses or parliaments for consideration."

Crop Substitution

Hernando Duran Dussan: "I believe that we candidates have a duty to present our points of view on national problems and on possible solutions. It seems to me that rather than focusing on political mechanics, we must deal with these substantive issues which are truly of interest to our people. Take drug trafficking, for example. Two years ago at the U.S. Department of State I told the American authorities that the drug problem

concerns both producing countries and consuming ones, probably more so the latter. I asserted that it was imperative that we take joint action, and that this action should be economic rather than repressive with respect to the producing countries. I explained how the Colombian peasant plants coca not to do harm to the young people of developed countries, but to make money. And I warned that the way to eradicate the planting of coca was to provide facilities for the peasant so that he can replace it with profitable crops that will have the same or a similar impact on his household economy as coca does. I proposed credits on a graduated scale, supervised by the Agrarian Fund and the Integrated Rural Development Program (DRI), so that the peasant can produce rubber, cacao, African palm, inchi, tropical fruits, lumber, etc. and earn an income that is better than or comparable to that received from the alkaloid. And I added that these credits should involve not only loans for peasants, but also infrastructure loans, so that they can get their products to market. I think we must insist on this line of action. In this area, as in that of smuggling, the most effective measures are economic ones. My administration would resume contacts to advance this policy, the most effective and least violent one. I would also continue the other effort to combat narcotics trafficking and all crime, no matter where it takes root."

Compromise Essential

William Jaramillo Gomez: "Colombia has paid the highest price of any country in the struggle against drug trafficking. In the lives of its most illustrious men, in the destabilization of its political institutions and its economy, in the destruction of its justice system, and in the degradation of its customs, the multinational drug corporation has taken the greatest toll on our country. To defeat the drug trade and its pernicious effects, we need a strategy mutually agreed upon among consuming and producing nations and those that benefit financially from the proceeds of the business. The attack must, therefore, be simultaneous on consumption, on production, and on the financial benefits of drug trafficking. In our case, it would suffice to enforce laws that are never enforced."

Challenging Situation

Alberto Santofimio Botero: "This challenging economic and social situation must be confronted by the international community through strategies and corrective measures; Colombia, a poor country that is suffering the scourge of violence and discredit because of consuming nations and the unprecedented prosperity of drug trafficking in the contemporary world, should not have to confront it in isolation. Our country must deal with the deaths and the discredit, while the others enjoy the vice and its huge financial returns. As long as there are consumers who pay good prices, there will be a terrible temptation for easy and illicit gains. Only close cooperation and solidarity on the part of countries with a consumption problem will make it possible to relieve the poor countries where the trafficking or production takes place of the terrible burden that this situation adds to traditional violence and social and economic imbalances in their traditional structures."

Inflation, Cost of Living

33480284e Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish
2 Aug 89 p 11A

[Special article series: "Presidential Precandidates' Positions"; All responses by Luis Carlos Galan have been excerpted]

[Excerpts] Galloping inflation and the high cost of living, a problem that is keeping Colombians awake at night, is analyzed today directly and with no holds barred, as the "main course" of the six presidential aspirants of the Liberal Party. EL ESPECTADOR in this report presents the proposals and strategies set forth by those who would lead the country for the next 4 years to deal with this issue.

Austerity in public spending, adherence to an economic and social development plan, restructuring the agriculture-livestock sector, sacrifices, austerity, and a good combination of solutions on all fronts are suggested by Drs Hernando Duran, Luis Carlos Galan, Ernesto Samper Pizano, Jaime Castro, Alberto Santofimio Botero, and William Jaramillo. [passage omitted on Galan]

Hernando Duran: "The battle against inflation must be waged by shifting gears, not by slamming on the brakes or putting your foot to the floor. The official policy must be comprehensive. In other words, economic remedies alone are not sufficient to control the problem. Economic strategies must be accompanied by political, social, and international measures. In addition, economic action must adhere to a strict development plan, since sometimes a unilateral measure such as monetary contraction at all costs may sacrifice loftier objectives, such as the generation of employment and economic growth.

"Some believe that anti-inflation remedies are limited to drastic control of the growth of the money supply. Monetary factors are clearly involved, but they are not the only factors. Inflation is a sign of imbalanced economic development, and as such, strategies to control it cannot aim at sacrificing economic progress on the pretext of correcting a symptom of the instability of that progress.

"The Colombian economy must pursue the overall objective of producing wealth in the country, as that is the only guarantee of generating urgently needed employment and the only way to strengthen the economy. For this reason, a solid policy of stimulating the rural sector, farmers and ranchers, is fundamental.

"It is essential that the amount of devaluation be monitored to make sure it does not in any case go beyond what is necessary to maintain the real value of the currency.

"The government's recourse to printing currency should be subjected to rigorous control. I have proposed that the government be required to adopt a monetary budget and a foreign exchange budget each year, both subject to the economic and social plan.

"The battle against inflation must be based on an appropriate combination of monetary, fiscal, exchange, and finance policies."

William Jaramillo: "Stability in the cost of living is the fundamental principle of the economic well being of an organized society. Without price stability, public and private investment cannot be planned. The causes of inflation have been thoroughly studied in Colombia; they involve not only an uncontrolled money supply, but also the seasonal nature of harvests that produce ordinary consumer goods and that play a major role in the family basket.

"We recognize the efforts that President Barco's administration is making to control consumer prices, but we warn that if profligate public spending continues and is ultimately financed by newly printed currency, we may end up on the hyperinflation toboggan in the style of Argentina. This creates an irreversible situation that makes it impossible to manage the economy and completely destroys the buying power of the least privileged classes. For this reason, we must immediately begin studying the multibillion-peso budget that the government has submitted to Congress so that we can excise the germs of inflation that may exist in that financial package. Similarly, we must review production projections to find out where there are holes that might lead to shortages. We must try to fill those gaps with timely incentives or well calculated imports that are allowed into the country in the right amounts and at the right times to avoid distorting national production.

"The high cost of living is the detonator of major social disorders. If the existing social imbalance and violence in the country are aggravated by the scourge of runaway prices, we will have the precise formula necessary for a revolution."

Ernesto Samper Pizano: "We are departing from the assumption that it is possible to attain an economic growth that is better distributed in social terms without sacrificing desirable goals of stability. To carry out this policy, People's Power proposes the following strategies:

"1) Action in the agriculture sector to prevent food supply crunches. The action entails a program to support the production, storage, and distribution of 13 foods that make up the basic diet of the Colombian family. The program will provide credit, technical assistance, and lower prices for inputs and machinery.

"2) A price and wage policy. To prevent cost adjustments from affecting the prices of industrial goods, a social pact among government, management, and labor is proposed as a strategy for reducing costs to levels consistent with pay raises.

"3) Foreign debt and Colombianization of the debt in public services. To reduce the impact of public service rate adjustments, we propose the renegotiation of the foreign debt and the development of mechanisms to protect service companies from the adjustments resulting from the devaluation.

"4) Elimination of the UPAC [Constant-Value Savings and Loan Certificates] program for automatic inflation adjustments or de-indexation of the economy. No less important in this task is the need to begin eradicating the so-called 'inertial inflation,' which under the UPAC program turns occasional price increases into permanent adjustments. This form of inflation feeds on itself, and would have to be eliminated. In addition, part of this strategy is to find viable alternatives other than UPAC for financing low-income housing.

"The final objective of our strategy against inflation is to improve the purchasing power of Colombian wages, not just reducing price increases or improving wages in mere nominal terms."

Jaime Castro: "One of the sectors that has the greatest impact on the cost of living is agriculture-livestock because of the repercussions of shortages and high point-of-origin prices on consumers.

"It would be a good idea to establish a policy of exceptions for this sector to improve its production and productivity. For this purpose, the following steps are necessary:

"1) Guarantee effective conditions of security in the countryside. To this end I have proposed the creation of 'municipal police forces' in the regions of the country that need such protection.

"2) Alleviate the heavy tax burden on wealth and agriculture-livestock activities. To achieve this, the tariff surcharge, which is equal to 18 percent of the CIF value of machinery and pesticide imports, must be eliminated, as I have recommended. The heavy tax burden imposed on rural property must also be eliminated.

"3) Create special lines of credit with their own terms and interest rates, and provide special incentives for certain crops.

"4) Apply the results of technological research on a large scale to improve basic products and stimulate demand.

"5) Improve the physical infrastructure of rural areas. For this purpose, I propose: A) converting small municipalities into 'modern rural villages' with public services, security, and a healthy community lifestyle for those who devote their lives to working in the countryside; and B) promoting the organization of 'secondary, intermediate, or alternative cities' that would be veritable 'development nuclei' because of their agriculture-livestock, industrial, and agroindustrial activities."

Alberto Santofimio: "I have proposed to my competitors that we set aside our advisers' diagnoses and statistics

and sit down together to decide how we are going to manage each of these situations. Here are some of my proposals for improving the cost of living for Colombian families:

"1) Dismantling the National Rate Board and allowing rates to be set according to the economic capacity of each region and the actual situation of Colombians, in a decentralized manner and with the participation of the community.

"2) Exemption from property taxes for low-income housing and a minimum rate for those that are paying off their UPAC debts.

"3) Subsidies for urban transport and public events so that students of all ages and pensioners, especially the elderly, may use these services.

"4) I propose that instead of the government spending billions of pesos through the National Coffee Fund to refinance private firms that have nothing to do with the coffee industry or with the well being of coffee-producing regions, these funds should be spent to guarantee potable water and sewage services to the Colombian people. This would prevent the strikes and demonstrations that are the ingredients of the social war about which we are so concerned.

"5) I will relieve and exonerate the peasants from their obligations to the Agrarian Fund and other government banking entities when they can demonstrate that they are behind in their payments because of violence or natural disasters."

Unemployment, Social Programs

33480284f Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish
6 Aug 89 p 7A

[Special article series: "Presidential Precandidates' Positions"; All responses by Luis Carlos Galan have been excerpted]

[Excerpts] One of the great challenges that Colombia faces in the future is the creation of more effective jobs. What do the presidential aspirants have to offer Colombians in this regard?

In this new report in the series "Every Precandidate Has His Position," Drs Luis Carlos Galan, Hernando Duran Dussan, William Jaramillo, Ernesto Samper Pizano, Alberto Santofimio Botero, and Jaime Castro respond to this question with specific proposals and express the social philosophies of their government platforms. Here are their opinions as a contribution to the debate of the issues in the Liberal campaign:

'Social Security Law': Santofimio

Alberto Santofimio Botero: "I propose a structural social security law that can be extended to the entire working class of Colombia. Any Colombian who has no other means of supporting himself has the right to employment. In addition, however, he has the right to benefits, to a fair wage, to pay raises that are at least the same as the rate of inflation. If we treat this issue with fairness, we will free ourselves of just protests against the government's abuses; in contrast, we will have workers who are loyal to their country. We must defend the citizen's buying power. An equitable policy of income, prices, and wages must be established.

"I propose that we study the viability of a subsidy or employment insurance, and that we join together social security in a great institute that will respond to the workers in the public and private sectors, avoiding the duplication of efforts, costs, and functions, which is obviously detrimental to the services provided the beneficiaries. We must create a great institute for security that will unify efforts and resources and thus provide greater social security coverage to our compatriots. It is also important for the worker to participate in the results of the company he works for; he has a right to receive information on how business is going, what production schedules are, new developments in the payroll, the financial situation, and plans for the future. I will strive to implement this in my administration, with emphasis on industrial and agricultural workers."

'Far-Reaching Social Transformation': Duran

Hernando Duran Dussan: "The state cannot be the only source of employment or the only engine of development, but it should have an irreplaceable instrument for coordinating and leading the joint efforts of the public and private sectors. Colombia should commit itself to a far-reaching social transformation, and in my opinion, that cannot be achieved without a tremendous effort to create employment. As president, I would spare no effort in the creation of jobs, and I demonstrated this when I was mayor of Bogota. During that time, I cut the unemployment rate to 4.9 percent in June 1981. This is not an easy task. The most developed countries on earth face serious unemployment problems. Our situation is even more complex. Since most of our population is young, the labor supply is growing at a faster pace than job opportunities.

"Obviously, the policies designed to combat unemployment have not yielded the desired results. We must revise the traditional strategies and seek more imaginative procedures that are in keeping with the country's possibilities. I have stated that in agroindustry there is a tremendous potential for employment. Similarly, we must do away with the orthodox concept of employment. We must not expect that it will always be industry, commerce, and the state that will offer new employment opportunities. In many cases each individual can create his own job by forming a small business. The risks are minimal, the traditional structure of our families can be the main source of support, and the greater stimulus becomes a desire to work for oneself. A real policy of technical assistance, information, and credit is all it would take."

'Industrial Restructuring': Jaramillo

William Jaramillo Gomez: "The labor supply in this country is growing at a rate of more than 200,000 people, while the creation of jobs is not keeping pace with these increases. This lies at the root of the chronic unemployment that our society has suffered. I have proposed that, through government reform and the elimination of uncontrolled intervention, the funds released by the liquidation and privatization of inefficient state enterprises be used for public investment, particularly the construction of physical infrastructure and housing, in order to create productive employment by the state. So far, state intervention in all areas of economic and social activity, including the production of goods, has translated into high operating costs and red tape, leaving productive employment by the wayside. In addition, our industry has not played a decisive role in generating employment and accumulating capital in recent years because of the loss of momentum that has occurred since the mid-1970s. That loss of momentum has been accompanied by a reduction in efficiency and competitiveness. For this reason, it is absolutely essential that industry be restructured so that it can play an important role in the generation of employment.

"Without a strong and competitive industry that is capable of competing with prices and quality on the world market, it will be useless to attack the phenomenon of unemployment. For this reason, I have proposed that we test a process of restructuring our industry and opening it up to the outside. This will allow our basic products to overcome exchange crises during periods of low prices. Our industry cannot continue operating without losing efficiency in a narrow market, because it will ultimately succumb to contraband, which in turn would exacerbate unemployment."

'Protection of the Informal Sector': Samper

Ernesto Samper Pizano: "In the next 10 years, the Colombian economy must generate 2 million new jobs. By the end of this very decade, it is possible that more than 65 percent of the labor force will be working in the informal sector, aggravating the problem of underemployment. The problem of unemployment in economies such as ours will be increasingly confused with the problem of income distribution. In view of these scenarios, I propose the following strategies:

"In the short term: 1) Increase social investment to improve the buying power of depressed sectors and to create new jobs outside the bureaucracy, in the development of labor-intensive projects that do not require much foreign exchange, such as the construction and equipment of the social infrastructure. 2) Renegotiate the foreign debt so that the short-term adjustment costs will not continue eroding income and so that more money will be available for social development programs. 3) Pursue a price and cost policy that will maintain the buying power of wages in real terms as a driving force of industrial and agricultural sales.

"In the long term: 1) A policy of organizing the informal sector to extend social security coverage to self-employed workers, to provide more facilities and credit and technology to small and medium businesses, and to create a base of social capitalization by using the cooperative system to attract and place new resources for profitable projects. 2) Creation of a system of science and technology, oriented by the National Council for Economic and Social Policy (CONPES), for the modernization of the Colombian productive system and the development of new programs for the participation of national capital in major infrastructure projects." [passage omitted on Galan]

'A Competitive Economic System': Castro

Jaime Castro: "Unfortunately, in the short run it is likely that unemployment will rise, as it is imperative that we make the economic system more technical, modern, efficient, and competitive. The decisions that must be made to this end can be categorized as follows:

"1) Human resources: Manpower must be trained, opportunities must be offered to college graduates outside the universities so that they can be trained professionally.

"2) Model of development: It is clear that employment depends on the degree of economic growth. For this purpose, exports must be promoted further and capital goods production, which creates enlightened employment, must be pursued. So far we have had a truncated development model that has remained limited to the production of final consumer goods and durables.

"3) Promotion of mini-businesses: In addition to what has been done, special credit lines must be created to allow professionals to organize as independent workers and to formalize the informal sector without destroying it.

"4) Creation of new jobs through the revision and enforcement of labor legislation. Debates such as the one we have already started on the retroactiveness of severance pay must be brought up to date, and regulations governing retirement, which should also include forced retirement, must be made more effective in the public and private sectors. Overtime and multiple jobs must be prohibited. The new sources of employment that have been created in other areas should be studied. It is not unemployment insurance but a new form of social security, almost a sort of premium to achieve pacification.

"5) Extension of decentralization. The municipalities have begun to become promoters of development, and some have established special lines of financing for the creation of community and associative enterprises to generate employment."

Housing Shortages

33480284g Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish
9 Aug 89 p 7A

[Special article series: "Presidential Precandidates' Positions"; All responses by Luis Carlos Galan have been excerpted]

[Excerpts] Important strategies for promoting low-income housing in Colombia and making it more affordable, the development and refinement of urban reform provisions, and the reduction of financial costs in this area by promoting the Territorial Credit Institute (ICT) and the Central Mortgage Bank (BCH) were discussed by presidential aspirants Hernando Duran Dussan, Luis Carlos Galan, Ernesto Samper Pizano, Alberto Santofimio Botero, William Jaramillo, and Jaime Castro.

In the eighth report in the series "Every Precandidate Has His Position," today the different proposals made in the Liberal campaign to solve one of the most critical problems facing the Colombian people—the lack of decent shelter—are contrasted.

Consistent Policy: Duran

Hernando Duran Dussan: "In the constitutional reform approved last year in the first round, we advanced the proposal to return to the economic and social development plan as an orderly and appropriate mechanism for progress. This is how I conceive the integral solution of the housing problem, as an ongoing, continual, essential element of the development plan. Low-income housing, which helps eradicate dire poverty, which should be affordable for all low-income people, requires various financial instruments: a significant and substantial budget allocation along with subsidized and expanded credit that allows for the reimbursement of costs.

"The construction of low-income housing should be regarded as an obligation of the state, just as health, education, and road construction are. Therefore, it should not be performed with profit in mind. It should be carried out hand in hand with a vigorous employment policy, because it is necessary for Colombians to have the resources they need to purchase housing. At the same time, it should be complemented with adequate savings systems and incentives for housing associations and cooperatives that promote the financing and construction of residential solutions. Housing construction should be one of the basic engines of job creation.

"I will not propose housing without a down payment, despite the terrific election results such a proposal would yield. I think it is necessary to be realistic and not to contribute to the decapitalization of state entities whose mission is to construct low-income housing, which is where the problem lies.

"Another system that must be promoted to the utmost is that of self-construction, with ample credit for financing the purchase of developed lots and building materials and the provision of basic construction plans. The low-income housing policy should focus on apartment blocks.

"It is necessary to return to the economic financing of rural housing that was practiced by the Agrarian Fund many years ago. Intermediate and small cities must be revived to avoid concentration in large cities. The ICT must be recapitalized, the Central Mortgage Bank's credit capacity and activities must be expanded, and the mortgage market must be strengthened. Savings and loan institutions at the national, departmental, and municipal levels must be invigorated." [passage omitted on Galan]

'ICT Cannot Be Eliminated': Santofimio

Alberto Santofimio Botero: "Low-income housing will be my watchword, but I will not give away houses without a down payment that no one will pay for; I will provide state-financed housing to the people, with services whose costs will be regulated by the city councils, heeding the voice of the community, not by the National Rate Board.

"We are going to defend low-income housing, because the foolish error of trying to do away with the ICT would be compounded by adding the problem of an urban reform law that was made according to capitalist criteria, eliminating financing of homes costing less than 4 million pesos by banks and corporations. What social urban reform, if what they did was place private and public credit resources only at the service of luxury housing, leaving the national proletariat with nothing but the bankrupt ICT, without access to credit from banks and corporations? How can we reorganize the state if in the sad twilight of this administration they are trying to destroy the little that has worked in Colombian life? I am a tireless supporter of housing for the poor and the ICT. We are going to defend it as the legacy of Colombian Liberalism. We do not accept the absurd idea that the ICT should be shut down, that it should be decapitalized, paying off its debts to banks and corporations by selling its land. That is an absurd criterion of privatization.

"The Liberal government cannot impose a nouveau riche, corporate attitude that bilks the middle class with the UPAC [Constant-Value Savings and Loan Certificates]. We are going to modify and limit this kind of procedure in our administration, because housing in Colombia should be guided by the social inspiration that Eduardo Santos gave it when he created the ICT: that it should be an organization for providing housing to the people. Thus, the state loses money and has to refinance it with other resources from the national budget."

Municipal Responsibility

Jaime Castro: "The housing problems that affect vast sectors of the population (shortage in quantity and quality) should be resolved basically by the municipalities. These entities understand this, and have begun to fulfill the following functions: expanding and improving the infrastructure of basic services, offering solutions for

decent housing, and ordering the physical development of the areas under their jurisdiction.

"To guarantee the continuation and improvement of a plan such as the one that is now being organized, it is necessary to:

"1) Provide that the central state, that is, the nation, should only formulate policies of urban regional development and finance the execution of them by local entities. To achieve this, 100 percent of the value-added tax should be transferred to the municipalities; the ICT should be liquidated and its functions and resources also transferred to the municipalities, and state efforts and aid should not be concentrated in the big cities.

"2) Elucidate the issue of housing and the strategy of urban development: what should be built, how, and when, and how is it related to the problem of land, services, the workplace, and public spaces.

"3) Give priority to programs to restore and improve historic centers (urban redevelopment), which would entail a tremendous savings to the community in buildings, networks, roads, and space. This may seem minor, but it is also important to accelerate the granting of licenses and permits and the installation of services, because the time factor has a considerable impact on the final construction costs.

"4) Obtain the decisive participation and effective support of the community (housing associations, cooperatives, etc.) in the execution of the various projects undertaken by the municipalities and the private sector.

"5) 'Repair' the urban reform law that prohibited the private financing of low-income housing, and provide, on the contrary, that both the private and the public sector should be involved in financing housing, in accordance with their capacities and possibilities."

'Enforce Urban Reform': Samper

Ernesto Samper Pizano: "The issue of housing must be approached within the general framework of urban development. For this purpose, my fundamental proposal is to enforce Law 9 of 1989, or the Urban Reform Law, emphasizing the following aspects:

"1) Legalization of substandard human settlements: The instruments set forth in the Urban Reform Law will be put in motion to enable city councils and mayors to legalize substandard barrios and enable their inhabitants to receive public services in their homes.

"2) Legalization of property deeds to housing of social interest: The urban reform law will allow for the legalization of the deeds held by thousands of Colombians whose mortgages are now in precarious situations. This will be achieved in several different ways: a) The peasant takeovers of government lands not intended for education or health projects that occurred prior to 28 July 1988 will be legalized; b) lots where 400,000 Colombians now live as squatters will be deeded to them; c) the deeds to property in barrios where individual ownership is undergoing procedures to determine ownership will be defined; d) property deeds will be given to the residents of housing of social interest as leaseholds, especially those located in central areas of our cities. Approximately 700,000 families will benefit from the application of the purchase prescription concept; and e) residents will be moved from high-risk areas to safer ones.

"3) Policy on housing of social interest: Regulation of Articles 44 and 59 of the Urban Reform Law to create a new system of financing for housing of social interest through the Central Mortgage Bank and the ICT, and developing forms of community self-construction.

"4) Increase in budget allocations: There can be no low-income housing if it is not subsidized by the state. Restrictions for financing of low-income housing with UPAC will remain in effect, and additional government resources will be committed to financing programs to meet the housing needs of the lower middle class through the BCH or the ICT.

"5) Execution of municipal housing programs, reforming the regulations governing 'municipal workers housing funds.'"

'Essential Part': Jaramillo

William Jaramillo Gomez: "The supply of housing in Colombia is now 600,000 units short of the demand, and the shortfall is increasing. The annual growth in demand amounts to about 100,000 units, 65,000 of which correspond to housing 'of social interest.' Consequently, housing policy is an essential part of the strategy for the struggle against dire poverty.

"To pursue a satisfactory solution, it is necessary to come up with radical innovations in the way the problem is treated. Public budgets are not enough to satisfy housing requirements, and as a result, the waiver or subsidizing of down payments is still a mere illusion promoted by populism. The subsidies that the government can offer in this regard should have two fundamental objectives: 1) the provision of urban infrastructure such as public services, vehicle access, parks, and other requirements prior to construction, and 2) the economic stimulation of the construction industry.

"The state cannot abandon its obligation to provide low-income housing, but neither can it assume that the ICT or the BCH are able to take care of the housing shortage by themselves. The construction systems employed by these agencies should be primarily mixed, so that there will be companies that can administer post-sale problems, including that of collecting loan payments.

"The enforcement of the Urban Reform Law, with the necessary adjustments, should begin to bear fruit immediately, not just from the standpoint of urban planning and the regional utilization of urban space, but also in

terms of the generation of land suitable for the construction of low-income housing. In this way, it is possible to reduce the percentage that the value of that land represents in the final cost of the housing. Currently, that amount is 40 percent, but through the mechanisms provided in the reform package, it can be lowered to 15 or 20 percent. But when resources are optimized in favor of the provision of housing, it is undeniable that, when it comes to low-income housing, one of the most effective means of solving the problem is so-called self-construction. This productive system deserves better organization and more incentives on the part of government authorities."

Congressional Reform

33480284h Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish
11 Aug 89 p 10A

[Special article series: "Presidential Precandidates' Positions"; All responses by Luis Carlos Galan have been excerpted]

[Excerpts] Abolishing parliamentary assistance and congressional junkets, reinforcing political control, and instituting the vote of censure and recall in the country are four of the proposals studied by the presidential aspirants of the Liberal Party in presenting their ideas about reforming the Congress of the Republic.

In the ninth report in the series "Every Precandidate Has His Position," EL ESPECTADOR this time asked Drs Luis Carlos Galan, Hernando Duran Dussan, Ernesto Samper Pizano, Alberto Santofimio Botero, William Jaramillo, and Jaime Castro about the changes that need to take place in the functioning and structure of one of the essential institutions of the democratic system in Colombia. Their answers were as follows: [passage omitted on Galan]

'Streamline the Chambers'

Hernando Duran Dussan: "As a sponsor of the constitutional reform package in its first round, I proposed an amendment to the Constitution that will undoubtedly translate into the modernization of the Colombian Congress. I have proposed, first of all, to guarantee the speedy and proper functioning of the two houses. On the one hand, I advocated the establishment of two regular sessions, one in each 6-month period, and on the other hand, I pushed for the clarification of the rules governing majorities, making the legislative function more expeditious. Secondly, I have strengthened the functions of Congress in that reform measure. The goal of this measure is to restore the balance between the branches of government and to return Congress to the privileged position it should hold in civilian society. In this regard, the reforms that I had the honor of sponsoring are extremely important. Planning is revived in Colombia, and it will now be possible for Congress to exercise the jurisdiction that is appropriate to it for passing the law on the economic and social development plan. All of that translates into democratic participation in the regulation of our economy. In addition to broadening the traditional functions, legislative and constituent, a similarly important function is added: political control. I have proposed that the task of legislating on significant matters such as the activity of the people who manage private savings should be returned to Congress. Similarly, I have stressed the need to rationalize special powers. The innovative political control that has been proposed amounts to an effort to empower the two chambers to practice effective monitoring of the actions of the government, passing votes of censure if that becomes necessary. The chambers are also empowered to advance all kinds of investigations of matters of national interest, and will have the power to subpoena anyone from the public or private sectors. In the third place, at the rate things are going, a statute is necessary to ensure the professionalism and clean representation of congressmen. This measure emphasizes, for example, the importance of the catalogue of incompatibilities that prevents the accumulation of offices. Finally, I aim to ensure that Congress represents all Colombians in the national territory; residents of intendancies and commissariats should enjoy better and fairer representation in the Senate and the House."

'Eliminate Stipends and Junkets': Jaramillo

William Jaramillo Gomez: "We congressmen have the greatest responsibility for reforming Congress in an act of self-criticism that requires sobriety and courage. Public opinion has a clear bias against the work that the legislative chambers perform, partly justified and partly unjustified. As for the constitutional reform that is currently under consideration, it is worth noting the following positive modifications: a) Removal from office—a congressman will be removed from office if he violates the regulations on incompatibilities and conflicts of interest, or if he misses 12 plenary sessions a year without good cause. This is a drastic punishment for immorality and absenteeism. b) Public hearings—The committees were empowered to subpoena private individuals and companies for questioning during the brief period when the Reform of 1979 was in effect; this measure allows for better oversight by Congress. c) Vote of censure against ministers—This innovation, which is subject to strict conditions for enforcement, will allow Congress to exercise the necessary political control over the executive branch in a serious manner. It will make the ministers more responsible in fulfilling their obligations, for the good of the nation.

"Among the issues not covered by the constitutional reform package are two whose absence is lamentable. If they were incorporated into our legal system, they would be very well received by public opinion. I propose: 1) strict regulation of foreign trips, and 2) the elimination of parliamentary assistance, as well as the aid provided by deputies and councilmembers."

'Vote of Censure': Samper

Ernesto Samper Pizano: "The Congress of the Republic is a linchpin in the so-called system of checks and

balances. It is therefore disturbing that there is so little public support of this institution in the opinion polls. To restore the legislative organ's role and effectiveness, I propose:

"1) Incorporate the concept of political oversight by Congress in the constitutional reform package, instituting the 'vote of censure' to force any high-ranking official to step down when a qualified majority votes against him in Parliament.

"2) It is also necessary to institute the concept of 'recall' in the evolution of the Constitution, through which the voter, through a summary proceeding, revokes the popular mandate given to a parliamentarian when it is shown that he has not fulfilled the representative function that he was elected to carry out.

"3) With regard to operations, the regulations contained in the Reform of 1979, such as minimum quorums, public hearings, and special sessions, must be restored. In addition, I think we should return to the system of ad hoc committees rather than standing committees. Legislative work is concentrated in two or three committees, and many congressmen who are involved in matters related to bills are precluded from working on them.

"4) Finally, either a unicameral system should be established, or the work of each chamber should be distributed by subject matter. The current procedure of following two rounds is cumbersome and obsolete."

'Single Chamber': Santofimio

Alberto Santofimio Botero: "I have been proposing for several years that we undertake a drastic reform of Congress, but there has not been enough support in the national representation to pass such a reform. In my view, the ideal formula is still the abolition of the anachronistic, slow and sluggish bicameral system, which has no historical or practical justification in our situation, in which the Senate and the House are elected on the same day for the same term by the same voters to carry out similar, if not identical, functions in many aspects of the institutional organization.

"If the ideal formula of the single chamber is not viable, we should at least consider a reduction of the number of congressmen; a change in the origin and term of one of the chambers; the regulation of parliamentary assistance, with the intervention of National Planning, so that it will be limited to serious regional development programs; the elimination of junkets that tarnish congressmen's image and fuels criticism of them; the establishment of year-round plenary sessions and committees; the effective functioning of the Plan Committee so that there will be truly democratic control of the plans and programs that the government proposes, rather than authoritarianism by the executive on these crucial matters for lack of a formula that provides for the integration and functioning of this important congressional committee.

"The vote of censure and political control of ministers and high-ranking officials of the executive branch should be established in order to strengthen congressional oversight. I also propose the recall of congressmen who violate the law or abandon the platform or the party with which they were elected. I believe, furthermore, that the executive branch should not be the only entity to call plebiscites or referendums, but that Congress should also be able to call such elections through a qualified vote."

Far-Reaching Reform Required

Jaime Castro: "People are trying to revive the legislative act of 1979, forgetting that the country's circumstances require a reform with a broader depth, content, and scope. Congressional reform should guarantee greater regional and political representativeness in the two houses, restore their dignity and autonomy, ensure legislative effectiveness, and make it possible to carry out the functions that are now its raison d'etre. The most important points, therefore, are:

"1) Integration: It is necessary to create a national electoral district, to institutionalize the single-member or provincial district, and to provide representation of intendancies and commissariats in the Senate and the House.

"2) Congressional bylaws: The 'multiple mandate' (election of the same person to various entities) should be prohibited, recall from office should be instituted, and the removal from office of any congressman who holds any government office should be established.

"3) Strengthening monitoring and oversight: The most important function of Congress today is to oversee and challenge the tasks carried out by the executive branch. This function gives it power and prestige, as well as legitimacy. The instruments that it uses to carry out this task should therefore be institutionalized: special hearings, motions for censure, objections, etc. The executive branch should not be weakened, but rather controlled to prevent the abuse of power. For this reason, the constitutional reform legislation being considered by Congress is flawed; it strips the executive of special powers for maintaining public order and managing economic problems in the belief that this strengthens Congress. From this point of view, the referendum or plebiscite is also justified as a procedure for reforming the Constitution and the law.

"Finally, it is necessary to rationalize congressional work: authorize joint sessions of the Senate and House, allow just one chamber to meet, modify the rules governing quorums for deliberations and for votes, etc."

Private Justice Groups

33480284i Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 13 Aug 89 p 9A

[Special article series: "Presidential Precandidates' Positions"; All responses by Luis Carlos Galan have been excerpted]

[Excerpts] The need to protect judges and juries, an increase in the budgetary resources allocated to the court system, and the categorical rejection of private justice systems are some of the points discussed by Drs Hernando Duran Dussan, Luis Carlos Galan, William Jaramillo, Ernesto Samper Pizano, Jaime Castro, and Alberto Santofimio Botero in examining the problems of the urgently needed reform of the Colombian justice system to guarantee its survival.

Today the six aspirants to the Liberal Party nomination for president of the Republic present their proposals on the best way to restore the state's ability to enforce the law and enable judges to carry out the prompt and responsible administration of justice.

The "colloquy" of the precandidates is presented here in this Sunday issue: [passage omitted on Galan]

'Private Justice Will Not Do': Duran

Hernando Duran Dussan: "To allow certain groups in the community to resolve all sorts of conflicts on their own and in pursuit of their own interests would lead the country to anarchy or to totalitarianism. Democracy will be one of the first victims of the practitioners of private justice, who try to justify their actions with ideologies of the left or the right. As a wholehearted Liberal, I have stated that we must vigorously defend democracy, strengthening the social rule of law. The state, represented in the legitimate forces of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies, is the only institution that has the power to resolve society's conflicts in law.

"As for the institutional reform of the system of justice, I have already, as sponsor of the constitutional reform package, proposed measures to strengthen the judiciary and to ensure speedier justice and due process in this fundamental service. These measures were approved on the first round. Among other instruments, they include the consolidation of the judicial career, the creation of the Superior Council of the Judiciary, and the financial strengthening of this branch on the basis of budgetary autonomy. The alarming backlog in court cases must be confronted with the adoption of urgent measures regarding budgets and procedures. Judges should only be responsible for dealing with serious litigation; other types of conflicts should be assigned to other officials for action. The updating of codes and the modernization of procedures are obvious measures; but now the very existence of justice is jeopardized. We must begin by protecting and backing our judges and magistrates. Then we must do away with violence in all types of crime. For this purpose, I have been proposing for some time instruments such as the constitutional provision that creates a specialized jurisdiction for hearing criminal cases involving serious threats to national security and order. This provision was approved on the first round, and should now be passed and implemented. We must free our judges from the pressure of assassination, threats, and intimidation, because under such circumstances not even the most learned jurist can adhere to the correct and proper administration of justice."

'Protection of Juries': Jaramillo

William Jaramillo Gomez: "I think the following points should be given top priority:

"1) Protection of juries—We must develop formulas that have already been tried successfully in other places, to keep confidential the name of a judge whose life may be in danger due to the nature of the case he is investigating. It would also be worth considering rulings by panels of judges, in which the identity of the author of the ruling would be kept secret. In addition, physical protection should be provided with bodyguards, security systems, and armored cars, at whatever cost.

"2) No more impunity—The judicial police should be given all the resources they need for their investigations to be complete, and the security forces should be provided with all the elements they need to catch criminals.

"3) Political decision and resource allocation—I ask in amazement, Why are we spending nearly 300 billion pesos on so-called 'financial bailout' transactions, while the government is unable to allocate even 20 billion pesos to improve the administration of justice in an initial stage, when everyone agreed on that sum at a recent justice forum?

"In addition, it is also necessary to undertake a process of 'dejudicialization,' turning over noncontroversial matters or those of voluntary jurisdiction to notaries and thereby decongesting the courts."

'Security for Judges': Castro

Jaime Castro: "Under the present circumstances, the most important and urgent measure in this regard has to do with the personal security of magistrates and judges. As long as this security is not guaranteed, there will be no justice in the country. The measures taken so far are insufficient for this purpose. We must order by law—invoking Article 121, if necessary—the anonymity of the officials who handle certain cases.

"The obvious flaws in our administration of justice are not personal in nature, but rather institutional. Those who serve justice do the best they can, given the circumstances and conditions under which they work. The first major reform has to do with the idea of specializing the administration of justice (having officials and staff devote their time just to judicial functions) and creating a high-level body to oversee the conduct of magistrates, judges, and staffs (external control). Hence the need to organize the Superior Council of the Judiciary.

"In the penal area, we have improved the effectiveness of the intelligence services and the security forces, but not that of the judiciary. For this reason, the system of investigating through the accusatory method must be

changed. The constitutional rigidity of the judicial structure is not compatible with the need to constantly keep pace with the conflictive socioeconomic and law enforcement situation. For this reason it is appropriate to lend greater flexibility to this organization and its working methods. It is also a good idea to update these methods. The trial jury is an anachronism that leads to impunity. Justice needs greater human and financial resources. To obtain the former, the Public Ministry should be eliminated; to obtain the latter, a minimum percentage should be guaranteed for the judiciary in the national budget."

'Restore Credibility': Santofimio

Alberto Santofimio Botero: "Colombian justice is suffering from a severe crisis of legitimacy. A major national goal should be to restore the authority and credibility of the judicial branch so that it can carry out its task to the utmost. For this purpose, I propose: 1) Eliminate the political parity of the high courts of justice to prevent the absurd exclusion of independent talents and the requirement of party loyalty.

"2) Eliminate cooptation and the current system of imposing a demanding judicial career at all levels, so that quality, dedication, and efficiency can be given priority over cronyism, influence-peddling, and nepotism.

"3) Give the judiciary budgetary autonomy so that justice will no longer by the Cinderella of government budget allocations. There should be full autonomy in drafting budgets and determining spending.

"4) Modernize, systematize, and introduce technology in all judicial offices.

"5) Create the office of defender of human rights and social guarantees. This official would be popularly elected and hopefully a member of an opposition party.

"6) Institute a program of humanization and education in the jails, provide for government protection and security of judges, officials, and staff of the judicial branch, and review procedures. To decongest the courts and prevent delays as well as multibillion-peso trials, crimes such as terrorism and drug trafficking should be handled by superior judges in brief accusatory proceedings; and all other crimes should be dealt with by municipal and circuit judges.

"7) Public defender programs for low-income people should be extended."

'Depoliticization and Autonomy': Samper

Ernesto Samper Pizano: "The proposals put forth by People's Power are the following: 1) The depoliticization of justice—It cannot have any color or respond to just one creed or ideology. We propose the dismantling of parity in justice. 2) Budgetary autonomy—The allocation of a sufficient budget to the judicial branch is essential. The counterbalance of this autonomy is 'territorial decentralization,' eliminating the notion of departments as units in favor of the formation of litigation zones and courts.

"3) Efficiency in the administration of justice—Justice is being 'done' but not 'administered' in Colombia. The modernization of operational procedures is indispensable. Efficiency is also associated with the remuneration of judicial officials. Poorly paid judges cannot administer justice well.

"4) Mandatory membership in the bar association for lawyers.

"5) Community law—Social law should be opened up to individualized law: decriminalization, dejudicialization, and delegalization will help reduce the caseload of the courts if they are used in major lawsuits."